

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0281

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, EGEN, CH

SUBJ: USLO OFFICER VISIT TO LIAONING PROVINCE

1. USLO OFFICER VISITED LIAONING PROVINCE FEBRUARY 3-7, TRAVELING BY TRAIN DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS FROM PEKING TO SHENYANG. THE FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VISIT.

2. TANGSHAN IS A DEVSATED CITY. WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTION COULD BE SEEN TO THE EAST AND WEST OF THE RAILROAD TRACKS, WITH VIRTUALLY NO BUILDINGS LEFT STANDING. EVEN BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED OF REINFORCED CONCRETE HAD TOTALLY COLLAPSED, TESTIFYING TO THE AWESOME POWER OF THE QUAKE. ALTHOUGH THE MAIN TRACKS AND SEVERAL SIDINGS HAVE BEEN RESTORED, THE RAILROAD YARDS ARE STILL CLOGGED WITH DAMAGED FREIGHT CARS, DESTROYED BUILDINGS, AND TORN-UP TRACK. AMIDST THE RUBBLE, THOUSANDS OF TEMPORARY SHELTERS HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED FROM THE STONE AND BRICK OF THE DESTROYED BUILDINGS. WHILE THE SHELTERS ARE OBVIOUSLY IN USE, RELATIVELY FEW PEOPLE WERE TO BE SEEN. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF A LARGE-SCALE CLEAN-UP OR RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT; NO BULLDOZERS OR OTHER EARTHMOVING MACHINERY WERE VISIBLE. SOME DISTANCE TO THE WEST, SMOKE FROM
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PARTIALLY DAMAGED FACTORY CHIMNEYS COULD BE SEEN. TWENTY-SIX KILOMETERS FURTHER NORTH, THE TOWN OF KUYEH SUFFERED THE SAME DEVASTATION AS DID TANGSHAN. IT APPEARS THAT AT LEAST A PART OF TANGSHAN'S POPULATION HAS BEEN RESETTLED IN THOUSANDS OF STONE SHELTERS IN THE FIELDS SOUTH OF THE CITY. AGRI-CULTURALLY, HOWEVER, THE POPULATION HAS BEEN BUSY.

ALL FIELDS HAVE BEEN PLOWED AND TEAMS OF WORKERS WERE ENGAGED IN LAND-IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS A STAGGERING AMOUNT OF WORK TO BE DONE BEFORE THE PEOPLE OF TANGSHAN CAN LIVE UP TO THE PROMISE OF THE SLOGAN DISPLAYED IN THE RAILROAD STATION: "WE ARE DETERMINED TO REBUILD OUR CITY."

3. TIENTSIN. RELATIVELY LITTLE EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE COULD BE SEEN FROM THE TRAIN PASSING THROUGH TIENTSIN ALTHOUGH SOME FACTORIES NEAR THE RAILROAD TRACKS APPEAR TO BE OUT OF PRODUCTION. A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE LIVING IN THE THOUSANDS OF SHELTERS BUILT IN THE STREETS OF THE CITY AND ALONG THE TRACKS.

4. SHENYANG APPEARED QUIET AND ORDERLY. OTHER THAN STANDARD SLOGANS SUCH AS THOSE DENOUNCING THE GANG OF FOUR, THE CITY WAS VIRTUALLY DEVOID OF POSTERS. IN MANY AREAS THERE HAD BEEN A CONCERTED EFFORT TO STRIP ALL BUILDINGS OF POSTERS, WHILE IN OTHER PLACES STANDARD SLOGANS HAD BEEN PASTED OVER LONG AND MUCH OLDER POSTERS. ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING POSTERS WAS AN OLDER ONE SIMPLY WELCOMING THE CONVENING OF THE (UNSPECIFIED) CONFERENCE TO CRITICIZE THE GANG OF FOUR. THE SAME PATTERN WAS REPEATED IN THE CITIES OF ANSHAN AND FUSHUN, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE STILL A FEW SCATTERED OLD POSTERS WHICH USLO OFFICER DID NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO READ. LIAONING'S ARTISTS, HOWEVER, HAVE HAD A FIELD DAY. MANY PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES, AS WELL AS ALL FACTORIES VISITED, FEATURED ELABORATE

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DISPLAYS OF HAND-DRAWN AND COLORED CARTOONS DEPICTING THE MACHINATIONS OF THE GANG OF FOUR AND THE CERTAIN FATE WHICH THE ARTISTS SAW AWAITING THEM AT THE HANDS OF THE MASSES.

5. A MAJOR CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY IN LIAONING TO BUILD UP THE STATUS OF HUA KUO-FENG. ONLY RARELY WAS A PICTURE OF CHAIRMAN MAO NOT ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OF HUA OF IDENTICAL SIZE. SLOGANS PRAISING HUA FOR HIS LEADERSHIP ABILITIES AND FOR HIS ROLE IN THWARTING THE GANG OF FOUR WERE IN EVIDENCE EVERYWHERE. ALL BRIEFINGS FOR USLO OFFICERS STRESSED HEAVILY CHAIRMAN HUA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY AND TO INCREASING PRODUCTION. A LONG AND NOT-SO-SUBTLE BALLET GIVEN BY A SHENYANG MUSIC AND DANCE TROUPE OPENED WITH THE PORTRAYAL OF THE GRIEF OF THE PEOPLE AFTER THE DEATH OF CHAIRMAN MAO AND WENT ON TO SHOW THE BOUNDLESS ENTHUSIASM OF THE MASSES AS THEY LEARNED THAT CHAIRMAN HUA WOULD BE THEIR LEADER. THE THEME STRESSED HEAVILY MAO'S

PERSONAL SELECTION OF HUA AND DROVE HOME THE POINT BY FREQUENT REFERENCE TO MAO'S WRITTEN STATEMENT: "WITH YOU IN CHARGE, I'M AT EASE." AT THE CLIMAX OF THE PERFORMANCE MAO'S STATEMENT APPEARED IN HUGE CHARACTERS ACROSS THE STAGE, EMBLAZONED WITH COLORED LIGHTS AND WELCOMED BY THE CHEERS OF THE PERFORMERS.

6. TENG HSIAO-PING'S NAME WAS NEITHER SEEN NOR HEARD DURING ENTIRE VISIT. CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE GUIDE, WHEN ASKED ABOUT TENG, RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT WHILE TENG HAD MADE CERTAIN ERRORS, THEY WERE IN THE NATURE OF CONTRADICTIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE AND THUS COULD BE OVERCOME. HE POINTED OUT THAT TENG IS STILL A MEMBER OF THE PARTY AND THAT CHAIRMAN MAO'S INSTRUCTION HAD BEEN TO CURE THE SICKNESS TO SAVE THE PATIENT.

7. INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES IN THE PROVINCE ARE HOLDING
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RALLIES AND STUDY SESSIONS IN PREPARATION FOR THE CONVENING OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING FROM TACHING IN INDUSTRY. FACTORIES ARE FILLED WITH POSTERS AND SLOGANS STRESSING THE NEED FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION AND ENCOURAGING EMULATION OF TACHING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANSHAN CONSTITUTION.

8. USLO OFFICER VISITED SEVERAL FACTORIES IN SHENYANG, THE IRON AND STEEL PLANT AND AN IRONMINE IN ANYNAN, AND A PETROLEUM REFINERY AND COAL MINE IN FUSHUN. DETAILED REPORTS ON THESE VISITS FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM.
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